

Does Shame-proneness Enhance our Understanding of Social Anxiety beyond Classical Cognitive Constructs?

DIANA-MIRELA CÂNDEA ¹

AURORA SZENTÁGOTAI-TÁTAR ²

Abstract

Several studies indicate that shame-proneness is associated with social anxiety symptoms. Cognitive models of social anxiety disorder and empirical studies assume that this association can be explained through the presence of distorted thinking patterns such as irrational beliefs and more specific negative global self-evaluations, in both shame and social anxiety. In this study we sought to investigate whether the contribution of shame-proneness to social anxiety symptoms is a unique one, distinct from that of negative global self-evaluation and other irrational beliefs. Results indicate the shame-proneness explains a unique and significant proportion of the variance in social anxiety symptoms, beyond the variance explained by negative global self-evaluation [$R^2=.11$, $F(1, 126)= 20.38$, $p<. 01$] and by irrational beliefs in general [$R^2=.15$, $F(1, 126)= 20.13$, $p<. 01$]. These findings suggest that shame-proneness has a unique contribution to social anxiety and thus warrants further scrutiny. Future studies should test these relations in samples with a confirmed diagnosis of social anxiety disorder while also investigating other features of shame that might be relevant in social anxiety.

Keywords

shame-proneness, social anxiety, negative global self-evaluations, irrational beliefs